Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

homemakers' chat
FOR USE IN NON-COMMERCIAL BROADCASTS ONLY
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

1.9
In3Hh

Wednesday, August 12, 1942

LIBRARY
RECEIVED
★ SEP 22 1942 ★
U. S. Department of Agriculture

"Wartime Food Shopping". Information from marketing specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

---oOOo---

For the past few months you've become familiar with the "Victory Food Special" symbol. You must have seen it hundreds of times in food advertisements in your daily papers, in local grocery stores and at other food counters. We hope all homemakers recognize it -- the large market basket filled with foodstuffs -- a bold Victory "V" in the foreground -- and running through the base of the "V" the words "Victory Food Special." As many times as you've seen this symbol, do you know the real "why" behind the Victory Food Special program?

The United States Department of Agriculture sponsors Victory Food Specials as a guide to wise wartime shopping for foods. The plan was originated to aid little farmers and consumers. But here is the real behind-the-scenes story of how these Victory Food Specials came about and why certain foods are selected.

Let us go back to last fall - and move from Washington, D. C., to the Southern States and westward to California, as the scene of our story. Europe was fighting a war then, but the United States was not yet involved. However, the hungry peoples of the continent were already looking toward America -- the country fortunate enough to have an abundance of good nourishing foodstuffs. The democratic countries of Europe asked that American farmers send enough food to keep up the strength of their fighting men -- and to supply foods for their women and children, food enough to keep up the morale of hungry people. It was at this time that Secretary Wickard made his Food for Freedom appeal. He asked for more of nearly

all foodstuffs grown by American farmers. The call was heard throughout the nation. In the South and in the West, the cabbage farmers were busily putting in their crops. Now, of course, cabbage is not a crop to ship abroad, but the farmers figured that if there was going to be a world food shortage, cabbage for the folks at home would be an especially valuable food. So they increased their acreage by 50 percent. No one can account for the exact yields of any crop, the weather conditions, and so many factors may cause greater or smaller production and change the picture. The farmers who planted more cabbage were beset by so many troubles they didn't know what to do. The yield that spring was a half-ton more per acre than had been estimated, so that, instead of a 50 percent increase, the cabbage grew and grew until the crop was up some 80 percent above average. The Department of Agriculture came to the aid of these farmers as best it could. The Department listed caggabe as a Blue Stamp Food and pushed cabbage in other ways, but there was no definite plan at that time for encouraging increased commercial shipment and sale of such an unpredicted bumper crop.

But now we have this Victory Food Special to help farmers with heavy supplies of fresh food and help consumers get the food at it's seasonal best. The marketing administration of the U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsors the Victory Food Special program -- to prevent waste and make the most of abundant supplies of fresh food here at home while other food, suitable for shipping goes abroad. By helping these fresh perishable foods sell while they are fresh, Americans get a better diet and make use of foods that otherwise go to waste and do no one any good. The first Victory Food Special was lettuce -- from May 11 to May 25, when California farmers especially, suffered from a crop 55 percent above the 10-year average. Homemakers all over the United States were asked to make a special effort

to use lettuce at least once a day -- to serve extra portions -- and in any way they could to help use up this fresh supply. You see, lettuce cannot be canned or frozen -- or put up in any way so that it can be saved for our armies or our fighting friends.

So farmers, distributors, retailers and consumers are asked to do their part in getting this fresh food to the dinner table from the farm in the most direct and economical manner possible, and to see that none is wasted. Since the Victory Food Special program started consumers have cooperated on 10 of these specials. By the way, a Victory Food Special does not mean that the food will be extra low in cost, or any lower than the usual seasonal price, as many people seem to expect. These foods are usually reasonable in price as foods at the peak of their season usually are. But you do get good quality for your money -- and certainly pays no more than she would otherwise. At the same time, she is doing her bit towards helping the home front by clearing these products of which there is a surplus, and releasing transportation facilities for more pressing needs.

At the present time we have an abundance of cheese. Secretary Wickard has been asking that you use cheese in large quantities. To call the attention of housewives to this surplus, a Victory Food Special of cheese has been announced from August 17 to August 29. Later, probably during late August or early September, another Victory Food Special will be tomatoes. An abundant crop is expected. Again, consumers will be asked to cooperate with farmers in moving this product. So, now, when you see the symbol "Victory Food Special," you'll know you'll be doing your part by buying these foods.

# # # # #